



## **VENTURA POLICE:** Walking to School Safety Tips

Working together to keep our community safe

**Please review these safety tips to keep our local students safe while walking to and from school.**

Children usually aren't ready to start walking to school without an adult until about fifth grade, or around age 10. Younger children are more impulsive and less cautious around traffic, and they often don't fully understand other potential dangers they could come across.

By walking with your children to and from school, you can familiarize them with the neighborhood, teach them about traffic signs, street signs and directions, and model correct behaviors when crossing streets. It's also a great opportunity for some chat time with your kids.

### **KEEP THESE TIPS IN MIND WHEN WALKING WITH YOUR CHILD TO AND FROM SCHOOL:**

- When crossing streets, hold your child's hand and always observe the traffic safety laws.
- Observe all traffic signals and let the school crossing guard help you.
- Be sure to look all ways before crossing the street and continue to watch for vehicles. Remind children drivers may not always see them.
- Consider inviting families in your neighborhood to walk children to school together as a group. Adults may take turns walking with the group, so make sure each child knows the adults in their walking group.

### **TWEENS AND TEENS: WALKING TO SCHOOL SAFELY:**

- Consider your child's individual developmental and maturity level when deciding if it is safe for them to walk to school without an adult. Some children may not have the skills to focus on safe pedestrian behavior until they are 10 or older.

### **FOR STUDENTS WALKING TO SCHOOL WITHOUT AN ADULT, SOME POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- Make sure they stick to a safe route to school, one with well-trained adult crossing guards at every intersection.
- If they need to cross any streets on the way to school, practice safe street cross-ing with them before the start of school.
- Ideally, they should walk with at least one neighbor child or older sibling.
- Make sure they know how to say "no" if someone they don't know offers a ride, and that they yell and run for help if needed.
- Explain to them that it is not safe to use a cell phone or text while walking, which makes them less aware of traffic.
- Choose brightly colored backpacks, jackets and other accessories, ideally with reflective materials for days when it begins to get dark earlier.

**To report suspicious activity, please call VPD's 24/7 non-emergency line at 805-650-8010. Always call 911 if an incident is in-progress.**